

READ

James 5:7-11

CONSIDER

A few years ago, while on a pastoral internship at another church, I was given an opportunity to start and build a softball ministry. This was an exciting opportunity for me, because years ago, as a non-Christian, I was introduced to the church community and the Gospel of Jesus Christ through a softball ministry at SCBC.

Funny enough, for our first game of the season, we were scheduled to play against an SCBC softball team that many of my friends were a part of. It was really fun to be playing against my friends -- and especially fun to get them out! However, the fun was cut short as I found myself on the ground with pain in my left ankle in the middle of the game. While launching myself towards a pop-fly, I had ruptured my Achilles tendon in my left leg.

Looking back on this situation, I remember a few things. Being in a cast was annoying as I was sweating all the time hopping everywhere. Doing simple things like showering became an ordeal. Worst of all, I was sidelined for the rest of the softball season that I was so looking forward to.

However, I also remember the kindness and generosity of my family, friends, and brothers and sisters throughout my recovery process. I remember the visits to the hospital that my friends accompanied me on. I remember how my softball team picked to practice at baseball diamonds that were more accessible for me while I was hopping around on crutches. I even remember how my mom helped me clean the spaces between my toes that were harder to reach because of my cast. Although not everyone was a Christian, I was really experiencing and learning from others of what it looks like to love someone who was facing a difficult situation.

This week, as we explore James 5:7-11 together, James reminds us that as Christians, like everyone else, we will face suffering in our lives. However, we can be encouraged to patiently endure because of our hope in Jesus Christ. That there will be a day when Christ returns to set all things right. I hope that we can see how even in the trials, challenges, and sufferings of life, that we can continue to be patient so that we can see how God is at work in strengthening our hearts and reminding us that we can continue to trust in Him through these trials.

Pastor Fabian Chiu

P R A Y

Heavenly Father, help us to patiently endure through the trials of our lives. Lord may you place our focus on not our circumstances, but on You who is present with us through them. Lord, we know that you understand our feelings in the sufferings that we face. Even though we may not understand why we suffer, help us to trust in you through it. Holy Spirit, produce in us patience and help us to eagerly await Christ's return to set all things right. God give us the heart and understanding for us to walk alongside others who may be suffering too. Help us to encourage them and to point them towards the hope of Jesus. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

D I V I N G D E E P E R

What would it look like if God gave you everything you wanted on your desired timing? What growth in your life and faith through patience in suffering would you have lost out on?

As we wait for the Lord to return, how are you seeking God to fortify yourself for the struggle against sin and difficult circumstances? How are you cultivating gratitude during seasons of waiting?

How can your experiences in difficult circumstances serve as a testimony to others? How might your experiences point them to hold onto the hope of Christ during their own challenges?